



**Niagara Bottling, LLC  
2560 E. Philadelphia Street  
Ontario, CA (909) 230-5000**

**Testimony of Niagara Bottling, LLC  
FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES regarding Raised Bill No. 328,  
AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL APPLICATIONS FOR LAND USE PERMITS AND TAX ABATEMENTS  
Before the Planning & Development Committee  
March 11, 2016**

To Senator Catherine A. Osten, Representative Philip J. Miller, Co-Chairs, and all sitting members of the Connecticut Planning & Development Committee:

Thank you for allowing Niagara Bottling, LLC, (Niagara) to submit written testimony on Raised Bill No. 328, "AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL APPLICATIONS FOR LAND USE PERMITS AND TAX ABATEMENTS."

Niagara is a family business. It is American owned and operated since 1963.

Over the past several weeks, there have been numerous articles in the media reporting on Niagara's plans to build a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Bloomfield, CT.

The facility will not only create up to 120 direct jobs at full build-out, but will provide employment opportunities for contractors and vendors throughout the region. In addition, Niagara will continue its track record of investing in people and communities as it consistently does in its 21 plant communities across the country. Niagara has worked in partnership with both Town Officials and State agencies to follow the processes that have been established by the State of Connecticut for the construction of our manufacturing facility in Bloomfield.

A number of media stories appear to attempt to: 1) create the impression that there was a lack of transparency in the approval process undertaken by Niagara and the Town of Bloomfield; and 2) argue that Niagara conducted itself in a manner that ignored the public process. In response to these erroneous media accounts and the introduction of Raised Bill No. 328, Niagara respectfully requests the consideration of the following facts:

Section 1 of Raised Bill No. 328 implies that companies are not forthcoming about the impacts and details of projects. In regards to Niagara's plan to build a manufacturing plant in Bloomfield, CT, we want to share the following timeline of public meetings and public hearing appearances with Committee Members to demonstrate our commitment to governmental process. (Links to meeting agendas and minutes are provided as supplement to the dates. Hard copies of these agendas and minutes are also being made available to the Committee.)



### **Bloomfield Timeline of Events:**

**February 2015** – Niagara re-engages with the Town of Bloomfield; previous expansion meetings took place in 2014.

**July 20, 2015** – Economic Development and Land Use Sub-Committee meeting – Niagara is mentioned by name and states that Niagara plans to be in Bloomfield on July 28, 2016 for a pre-development meeting

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=54f508b4-7cb9-49bb-bcb1-b84fc9d6753e>

Minutes:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=6dfcd1ce-d986-4179-b7aa-0548a401e38a>

**July 28, 2015** – Niagara's team is in town for pre-development meeting.

**August 10, 2015** – Town Council meeting – Mayor Gamble puts on record that a meeting with Niagara took place.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=da4f919a-477a-494e-8274-67f15e8bd8ae>

Minutes:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=b5a5a220-2d11-41e6-9e38-3f083cd2fc6f>

**October 19, 2015** – Economic Development and Land Use sub-committee provides an update on Niagara's project. The sub-committee discussed possible tax abatement and referred the matter to the Finance Committee.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=a23c3aac-c4a4-4389-bad9-c2bee9b69bdf>

Minutes: Included in the packet.

**October 27, 2015** – Niagara submits application to State Economic Development office, specifically Robert Rigney, Project Manager, for consideration of state incentives.

**November 16, 2015** – The Niagara project was listed on the agenda. Specific questions about the tax revenue generation for the Town, both on the existing property as well as after development by Niagara, were discussed.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=54b65be7-895a-4e69-8a0f-6455bf8eb92b>

Minutes: Included in the packet.

**November 16, 2015** – Economic Development and Land Use discusses Niagara project. Meeting minutes are available through the Town Clerk's Office.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=39ce44c3-92fe-4d28-bca3-1e97c6de1da8>



**November 16, 2015** – Wetlands Commission Public Hearing. Niagara’s name was not mentioned in either the notice or at the meeting. Notice attached. No opposition was present at the meeting. Meeting minutes are available in the Town Clerk’s Office.

**November 18, 2015** – Planning and Zoning Commission. Niagara’s name was not mentioned in either the notice or at the meeting. Notice attached. No opposition was present at the meeting. Minutes: Included in the packet.

**November 18, 2015** – MDC public hearing for sewer ordinance change after public notice. No public attended.

Water -

Agenda:

<http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Public%20Hearing%20Notices%20%26%20Agendas/Agenda%20for%20Public%20Hearing%20Water%20Ordinances%20FY16%20Budget.pdf>

Notice:

<http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Notices/Hearing%20Notice%20for%20Town%20-%202016%20Water%20Supply%20Ordinance%20Revisions.pdf>

Sewer –

Agenda:

<http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Public%20Hearing%20Notices%20%26%20Agendas/Agenda%20for%20Public%20Hearing%20Proposed%20Revisions%20s12x.pdf>

Notice:

<http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Notices/Hearing%20Notice%20-%20s12x%20-%20Town%20Clerks.pdf>

Minutes:

[http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Minutes/M%20-%20Water%20Bureau%2011\\_18\\_15%20DRAFT.pdf](http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Minutes/M%20-%20Water%20Bureau%2011_18_15%20DRAFT.pdf)

**November 23, 2015** – Town Council meeting – Niagara is discussed as a “water bottling plant” during the Land Use update portion of the meeting

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=46dbdf7d-e221-4068-b21f-70d7b0294935>

Minutes:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=68662bd7-d467-448b-bc2f-7ee130c4686f>

**December 7, 2015** – Niagara presents to the Finance Sub-committee. Tax abatement is passed in sub-committee and the committee asked Niagara to present at the next Town Council meeting.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=bdce9940-382b-47c2-b158-af043595de48>

Minutes:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=7c977a38-a7e2-4f1b-83c0-50808eefd0a9>



**December 14, 2015** – Town Council discussed the proposed tax abatement. Abatement passed unanimously.

Agenda:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=7229aceb-adf1-4b96-a06c-5f8084afa95d>

Minutes:

<http://bloomfieldct.org/Resources.ashx?id=7ca7420e-b80b-4cef-be7e-7595a93bd7cd>

**December 14, 2015** – MDC Board approved special sewer charge rate reduction and industrial water user rate for large water users and not just Niagara.

Minutes:

[http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Minutes/M-MDC%20Government%2012\\_14\\_15%20DRAFT.pdf](http://www.themdc.com/assets/uploads/files/2015%20Minutes/M-MDC%20Government%2012_14_15%20DRAFT.pdf)

**December 23, 2015** – State ED office, DECD, provided Niagara with incentive offer letter.

**January 8, 2016** – Niagara signs tax abatement and sends it to Bloomfield for signature

**January 11, 2016** – Bloomfield signs and executes the tax abatement agreement

**January 27, 2016** – Niagara declines State incentives

As companies work through the due diligence process, it is important that each of these steps be undertaken before a location decision is announced. Niagara has worked in partnership with both Town officials and State agencies to follow the processes that have been established by the State of Connecticut. Given the record of engagement, we respectfully believe it is unfair to attempt to demonize the company or Town officials. We would ask the Committee to consider the facts when considering new legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Derieth L. Sutton

Director of Economic Development & Government Relations

Niagara Bottling, LLC

[dsutton@niagarawater.com](mailto:dsutton@niagarawater.com)

(949) 910-3950